



the Copper Hill Connection

March 2017

Pastor's Postings

Three Great Ways to Observe Lent

by Rev. Dr. Kelvin S. Jones

People often wonder, How should I observe Lent?

Here are three excellent suggestions I follow myself, inspired by the 2015 Lenten Letter of Methodist Bishop Jane Allen Middleton:

"Give Up"—Sacrifice of some kind is an honored Lenten tradition. Jesus' sacrifice for us inspires us to discipline ourselves by meaningful sacrifice. Be creative. Traditional fasting from specific meals or foods may help us to discipline our appetites. But that is not the only kind of giving up that we need to learn. One young mother fasted from all media for a week! How about having a Lenten journey of de-accumulation, striving to reduce instead of add to our "stuff." Maybe we set a goal of recycling, giving away, discarding or repurposing a set number of items each week.

"Take Up"—Jesus encouraged us to take up our cross and follow Him. Often this means tackling some project or ministry on His behalf. We are His hands and feet of love, His influence working for justice and healing. Some Christians study the Bible, but do not use what they have learned. How about leading a study for new Christians?

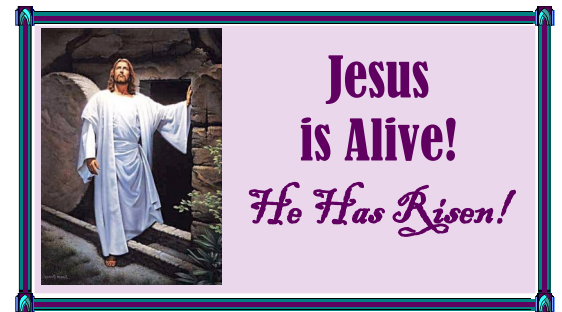
Or visiting someone who needs encouragement, someone recovering from surgery or in a nursing home. Volunteer to help with crafts for a children's or senior citizen's event.

"Look Up"—to "Receive from Jesus." We live in the age of the Holy Spirit. God does not expect us to live the Christian life in our own strength. During Lent is an ideal time to draw on God's strength. Choose an additional way to draw close to God and allow His Spirit to fill you. Lent provides an ideal opportunity to take advantage of the Bible promise, "Come near to God and He will come near to you" (James 4:8 NIV 2011). Update your devotional practices in some way. Perhaps you could read a challenging spiritual classic. Some of my favorites are listed below.

The key to looking up during Lent is not just devotional activity; it is our attitude of receptivity--opening our mind to hear from God and our spirit to be strengthened anew by God's Spirit.

Suggested Reading:

- "Created to be God's Friend" by Henry T. Blackaby.
- "Secrets of the Vine" by Bruce Wilkinson
- "Pilgrim's Progress" by John Bunyan



EASTER EVENTS

Palm Sunday, April 9, 9:30 AM:

We'll celebrate Jesus' joyful entry into Jerusalem with the giving of palm leaves to each one attending. Following the service, please join us for Coffee Hour in the Fellowship Hall.

Holy Thursday Communion Service, April 13—7 PM: Revisit Jesus's last moments with His disciples the night before He gave His life to bring us salvation. We will follow His command, "Do this in remembrance of Me."

EASTER SUNDAY, April 16—9:30 AM

Join us in celebrating the event that changed history—Christ's resurrection! Our choir will present, "The Love of Christ," an upbeat song describing the magnitude of love shown to us by our Savior. The Men's choir will remind us of God's forgiveness in Christ, with the equally upbeat version of "Happy Day!"

After the service, adults can enjoy COFFEE HOUR refreshments, while children ages 12 and under are invited to our annual EASTER EGG HUNT on the church lawns.

Easter Egg Hunt

Sunday—April 16

Following the

9:30 AM Easter Service

All Children ages 12 and under

welcome!



Ministries of Our Church

Food Pantry Donations

During 2016, our church gave more than **950 pounds** of goods to the food banks of East Granby, Granby, and Suffield. Well done! **Thank you to all who donated!**

We continue to collect nonperishable food, personal care items, paper products and cleaning supplies. When the box is full (or sometimes overfull), it is taken to one of these food pantries that we support. The collection box has been moved to the back of the kitchen for the winter months. When you are doing your weekly shopping, please pick up an item or two for those less fortunate.

St. Pauly's Collection

Over the past year, we have collected enough used clothing in the St. Pauly's shed to bring in \$680.52. At only four cents per pound, that means we collected more than 17,000 pounds of clothing! Because of people's generosity, we were able to share this amount with the three area food pantries, giving more than \$225 to each.

In addition to clothing, St. Pauly's also accepts useable shoes, sneakers, belts, purses, linens, blankets, and drapes. (See page 3 for more info.)



"Goings On" at Our Church

New Event—Spring FLOWER ARRANGING CLASS

Learn how to create your own flower arrangements at the Spring Flower Arranging Class on Saturday, **April 8**, from **1:00 to 2:30 PM**. Instructors are Sheri Mandirola and Sarah Oliver from Flowers @ Oxen Hill Farm. Sheri and Sarah own and operate a farm flower share and floral design business in Suffield and have taught floral design classes.



The cost of \$15 includes all the flowers and materials needed to complete the arrangement, plus cookies and beverages during the class. In addition, participants are invited to support our local food banks by bringing a donation of non-perishable food items. Everyone will come away with a spring floral arrangement perfect for a centerpiece for a holiday dinner table.

If you'd like to attend, please RSVP before March 30 to Susan Madry—860-668-1031.

Spring Tag & Bake Sale

Need a place to donate unused household items? On Saturday, May 6, we will hold our Spring Tag Sale, from 9 AM until 2 PM. We welcome all types of donations: dishes and other household goods, furniture, tools, etc. No clothing please.

We will hold a "Drop-Off Day" on Saturday, April 29, from 9 AM until 1 PM. For anyone who needs more info or items picked up, please call Susan Madry at 860-668-1031.

We ask that donations for the Bake Sale be wrapped and priced, and brought to the church on the morning of May 6, before 9 AM.



Ham Dinner

Come hungry to our annual Ham Dinner on Saturday, **May 20**. We will have only one seating, at 5:00 PM. The menu will include baked ham, scalloped potatoes, green peas, carrots, and pickled beets, with cherry pie for dessert. The cost will be \$12 per adult, \$6 for children under 12, and preschoolers will be free.

For reservations, call Judy Holcomb at 860-668-7953.

Activities

You May Have Missed

On Sunday, January 29, the men of the church prepared **Brunch** for the congregation. Some foods were prepared ahead (coffeecakes, etc.), but the men cooked bacon, sausage and pancakes for us. What a delicious and fun time! We hope to have more brunches.

Our annual **Comed Beef Dinner** on Saturday, March 4, was a success, with more requests for reservations than we could handle! Everything was "delicious!" We raised \$954 for the church's general fund.

New Bible Study



The Lenten season motivates us to study God's Word as an expression of our devotion. This year Copper Hill Church is sponsoring a Bible study series on the Letters of the Apostle John. Led by Pastor Kelvin Jones, the study meets on Monday evenings at 7 PM at the home of Judy Holcomb and at 1:30 PM on Tuesdays at the Higley Village Clubhouse. New participants are welcome.

Each small group session includes plenty of time for discussion and a short prayer time at the conclusion. The study series will continue through May.

John's most well know writings are his Gospel account and his apocalyptic and prophetic book, "Revelation." But he also wrote three letters, known as First, Second, and Third John, which are included in the New Testament. First John was written to Christians in the young churches and the other two very short letters were written to individual church leaders. We are learning that the three key words for his first letter are "light, life, and love."

"Jesus Speaks to Our Times"

Nearly everyone has been frustrated and upset by the recent tenor of the political dialogue in our country and troubled by some of the reactions to the elections. Pastor Jones believes that the Word of God and the Christian church have a special mission in exactly these kinds of times.

He has begun a message series for the Lenten/Easter season called "Jesus Speaks to Our Times." It draws from the accounts of Jesus' last days to find guidance for us today.



In the first message, on March 12, Pastor Kelvin reminded us that, in stark contrast to the self-focus and prejudice often evidenced today, God's love demands that we listen, show empathy, love impartially, and put love into action.

The series will encourage Christians to make their own mark with an agenda neither right nor left, but an agenda of love deliberately like Jesus.



"He has given us new birth into a living hope, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

1 Peter 1:3 NIV



About St. Pauly Textile Inc.

If you've dropped off used clothing in the St. Pauly shed in our church parking lot, you've probably wondered, *Who is St. Pauly and what do they do with these clothes?*

According to their website, St. Pauly Textile Inc. is a family-owned for-profit company based in Western New York, and a member of the Better Business Bureau. They collect useable clothing for people in need of it in the U.S. and in developing countries. They tell us there is a great need for clothing around the world. By contrast, 85% of clothing in the U. S. is thrown away, with only 15% reused.

St. Pauly checks their drop-off sheds regularly to make sure they're clean, and to pick up clothing. Their service helps local community organizations such as Copper Hill Church with their chosen mission projects, by purchasing the clothing, paying by weight. Our church is then able to cycle the money received back into the community by donating all of it to the area food banks. St. Pauly sells and distributes the clothing to organizations such as the U.N., relief organizations, foreign and U.S. governments, and private companies.

In addition to clothing, St. Pauly also accepts shoes, purses, linens, bedding, blankets, curtains, and stuffed animals, all in good condition, of course.

We are grateful to the many anonymous donors of clothing in our community. We want them to know they're giving twice: first to people around the world needing clothing, then to local families who are thankful to receive groceries they can use from the food banks.

We are reminded of Jesus' words, "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me" (Matt. 25:40).

For more info, check St. Pauly Textile Inc. at

<http://www.stpaulytextile.com/about>

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Copper Hill Connexion

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If you would prefer to receive your copy by email, please let us know.

Comę Celebrate with Us!

April 8—1:00 PM: Spring Flower Arranging Class

April 9—9:30 AM: Palm Sunday Service, Coffee Hour

April 13—7 PM: Holy Thursday Communion Service

April 16—9:30 AM: Easter Sunday Service
Choir Specials



COFFEE HOUR—following the service
& EASTER EGG HUNT—for children ages 12 and under



Find us on the **web:** www.CopperHillChurch.us

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